

Equine Services for

Military Service Members & Families



Contact Denise Spittler to gain more information about schedules for Family Activities, Transitions Groups, Therapeutic Riding, and more.

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**CKRH is a PATH, Int. Premiere
Accredited Center.**

Central Kentucky Riding for Hope

Equine Services for Heroes™



“There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man.”

Winston Churchill

Central Kentucky Riding for Hope (CKRH) has a mission to enrich the community by improving the quality of life and health of children and adults with special physical, cognitive, emotional and social needs through therapeutic activities with the horse. Beginning in 2010, CKRH began offering Horses for Heroes, which serves military veterans and their families, includes therapeutic riding, community transition services and mental health services.

Equine Services for Heroes

Types of Activities

Equine assisted activities and therapies offered at CKRH include:

- **therapeutic horsemanship (non-mounted)**
- **therapeutic riding (mounted)**
- **psycho-educational (non-mounted)**
- **psychotherapy (non-mounted)**
- **therapeutic carriage driving**

Since horses are prey animals, they are finely tuned to their surroundings — much like the skills taught in the military for survival. Horses are honest creatures, which makes them especially powerful messengers. When a participant complains that the horse is stubborn, for example, many times the lesson to be learned is that if they change themselves, the horse responds differently."



Therapeutic Riding

Therapeutic riding focuses on horsemanship skills, community, and is conducted in individual and small group settings.

"It's a wonderful experience, it's a feeling of being in charge of myself, of being in charge of the horse, the release of tension and stress, a feeling of peace and freedom I can't get anywhere else. It doesn't matter how many problems you have, you forget about them."

Participant quote

Non-mounted Activities

Horses are very sensitive, highly alert, and exceptional at reading non-verbal communication. Horses allow us the opportunity to work through how to change our lives in an experiential, in-the-moment and emotionally safe environment.

Benefits of Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies:

- Action, not talk –
- Solution-focused – warriors must find their own solutions to proposed exercises through hands-on experience; they learn to rely on themselves and their team members.
- Foster resilience – experiential activities re-create frustrations, stressors, and relationship problems. Warriors learn to adapt, improvise, and overcome perceived stressors as effectively at home as they do on the battlefield.
- Focus on non-verbal communication – horses confront unhealthy non-verbal messages, providing awareness of how participants communicate and promoting change to healthy communication styles.
- Adaptability – warriors must respond to the unpredictability and inability to “control” the horses and discover ways to make the relationship work.
- On the ground activities with the horses are designed to reflect real life issues.